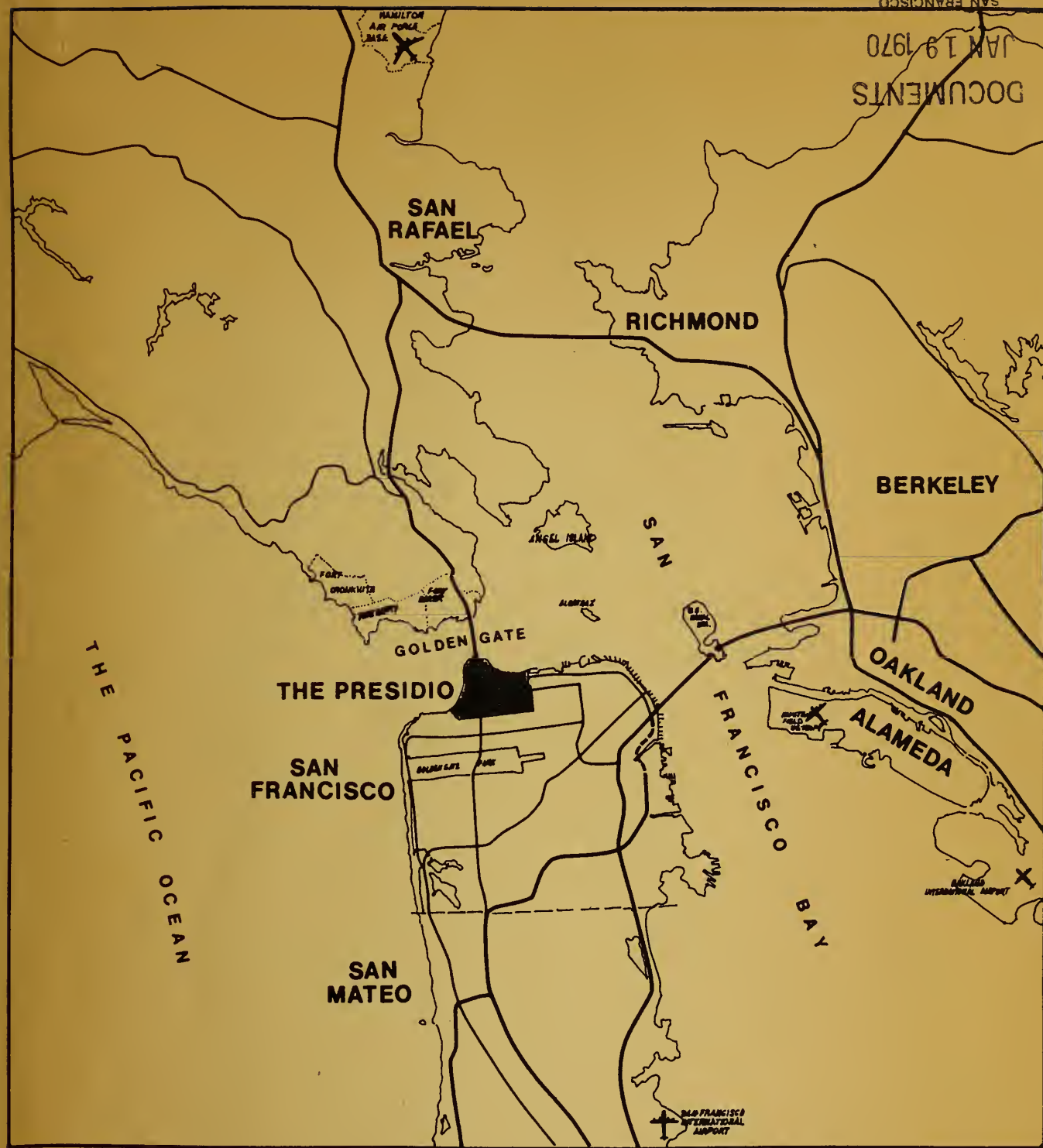


DOCUMENTS
JAN 19 1970



A REVIEW OF THE U. S. SIXTH ARMY
MASTER PLAN
 FOR THE
PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO



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REVIEW OF THE 6th ARMY MASTER PLAN FOR
THE PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO

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Department of City Planning
November 1969

D REF 711.4097 R325

A Review of the U.S.
Sixth Army master plan
1969.

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REVIEW OF THE MASTER PLAN FOR THE PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO

On July 17 the City Planning Commission held a public meeting to review the Presidio Master Plan and to inform concerned citizens of the proposals contained in the Plan. At this meeting the Commission requested the staff of the Department to prepare an analysis of the Plan's proposals. This report is so directed.

The first section of the report presents a brief review of Presidio history and planning background. Following this material is the staff evaluation in text and graphics of the current Presidio Master Plan, which focuses on two major issues: 1) preservation of the open space character and historic values of the Presidio, and 2) improved coordination of Presidio planning with City objectives and policies for development. Staff recommendations complete the report.

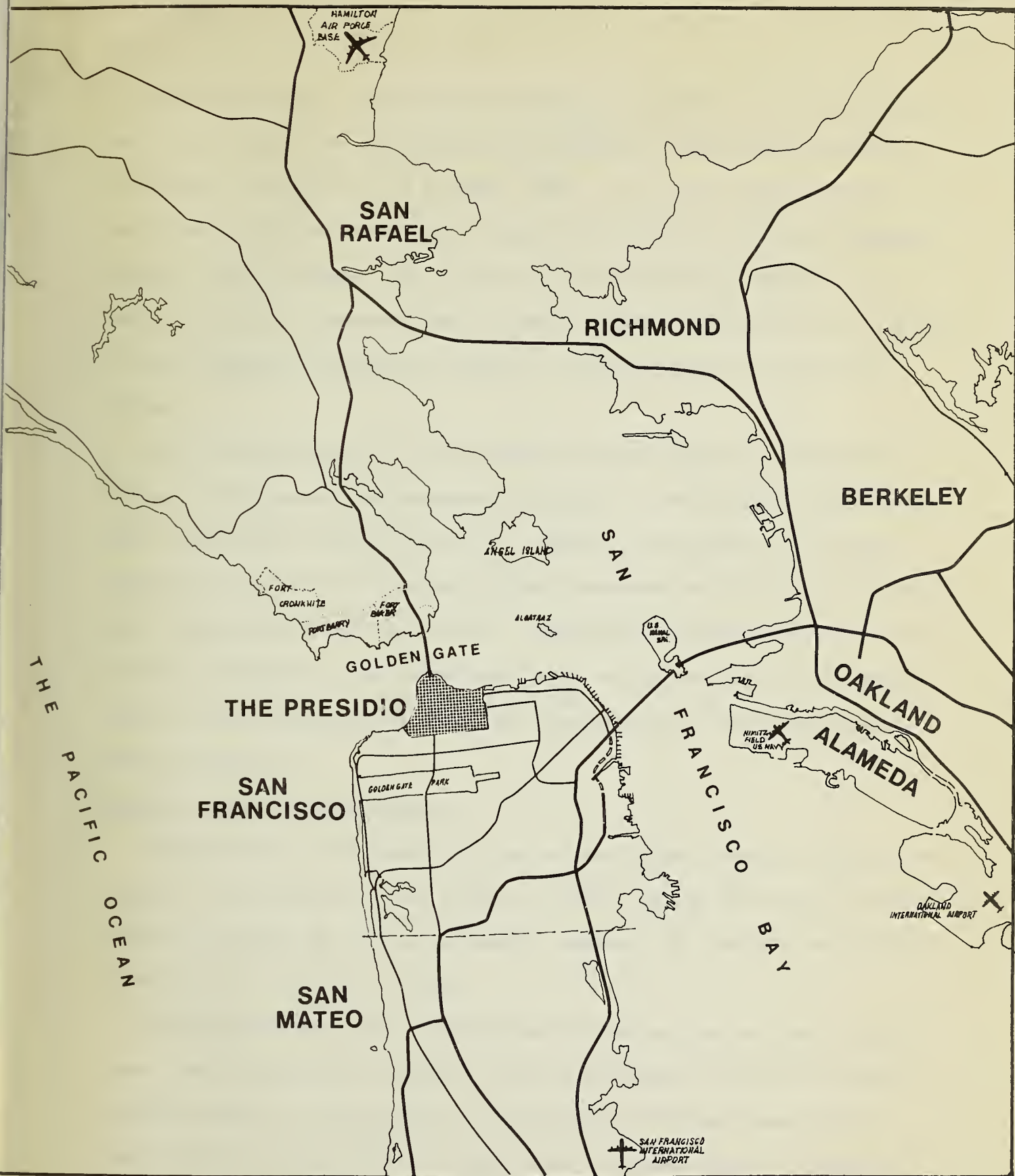
I. BACKGROUND

Location and Extent

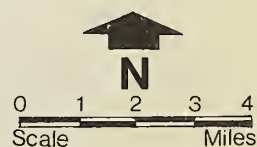
The Presidio of San Francisco, which includes the Fort Winfield Scott area, is situated on the northwest tip of the City at the entrance to San Francisco Bay. The installation is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the north by San Francisco Bay. On its landward sides, the Presidio abuts intensely built residential areas.

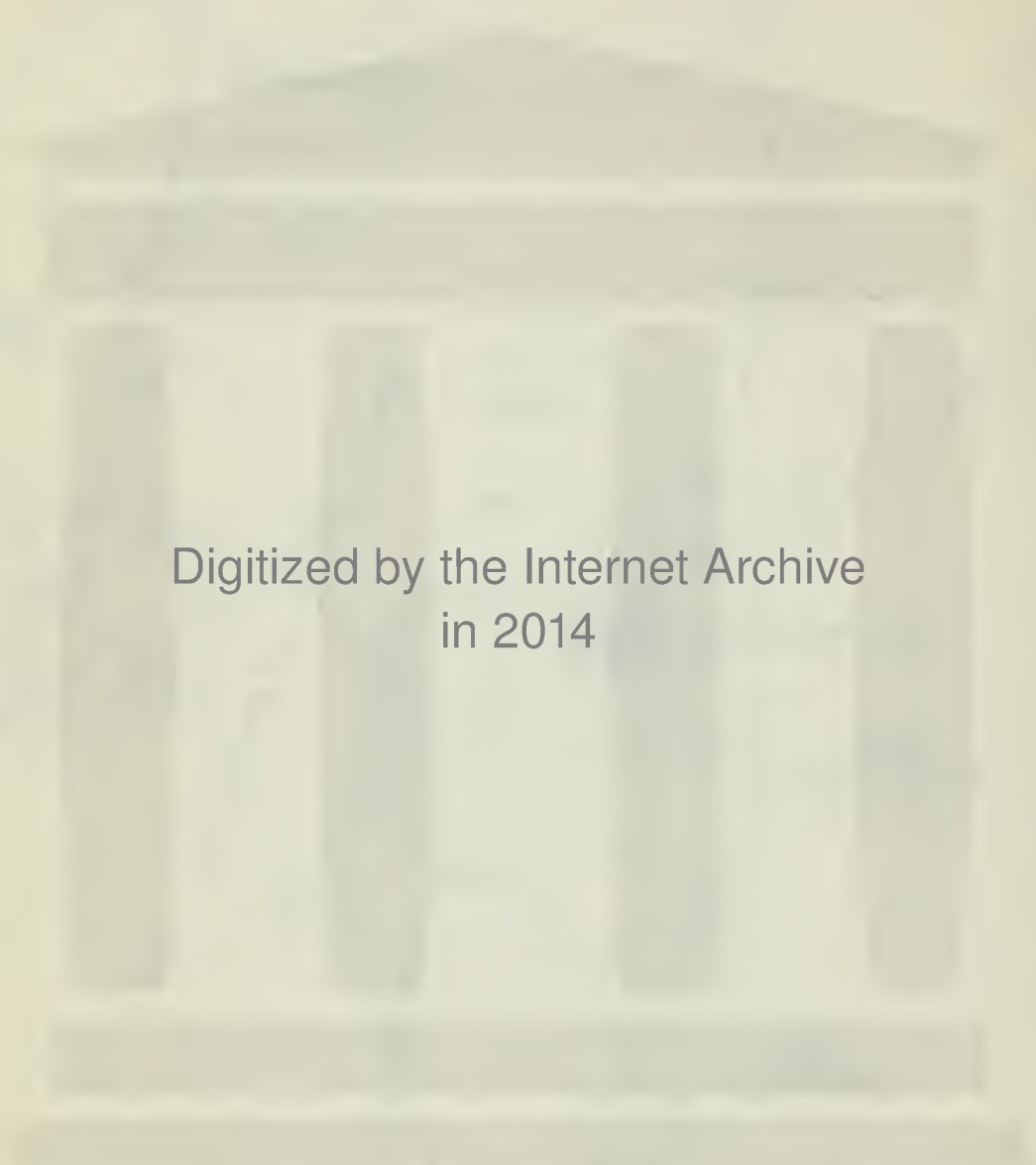
The installation consists of approximately 1,805 acres of Government-owned area of which 1,441 acres are land and 364 acres are submerged. The Federal Government has exclusive jurisdiction over this area with exception of those areas where it has been conditionally retroceded to the State of California in connection with public use of the Golden Gate Bridge.

The Presidio was founded as a military post by Spain in 1776. In 1822



THE PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO LOCATION MAP





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it came under Mexican control with the ending of Spanish rule in California. The United States took possession of the Presidio in 1846 and activated it as an Army installation on 6 November 1850. It is now an active Class I installation with permanent status under the jurisdiction of the Commanding General, Sixth U.S.Army. The Presidio of San Francisco is unique in that nearly all of it is reserved public domain, transmitted intact from the kings of Spain through the Republic of Mexico to the Government of the United States.

Over the years, much of the Presidio has been improved with fortifications, and permanent and temporary buildings. A few existing improvements were constructed before the Civil War. However, the majority of existing facilities were built in four war periods: permanent and temporary facilities were constructed during the Civil War, Spanish-American War, and World War I periods, and temporary facilities were built during the World War II period. There has been comparatively little new construction on the installation since World War II.

Presidio Master Planning History

Over the past two decades the Army has maintained a Master Plan for the Presidio. The plan has varied greatly in detail during the time as the Army frequently revised it to meet its needs. However, the plan has not changed significantly in concept or scope.

Periodically over this time the Presidio Master Plan has been a public issue. Until recently it appeared that the Department of the Army might relinquish control of the Presidio. This prospect generated considerable speculation as to the best use of the site if the Army were to abandon it. The issue of alternative uses for the site receded in 1963 when the Army established a firm policy to keep the Presidio as a permanent military installation. It was popularly assumed at that time that the land use

pattern for the site would remain substantially unchanged.

Previous Planning Liaison with the Presidio

The Department of City Planning has maintained an informal liaison with Presidio officials over the past ten years. Until recently this liaison was carried out through the Presidio Installation Planning Board. At permanent military installations, Installation Planning Boards are established to coordinate activities of the Department of Defense with local agencies and planning commissions. Their purpose is to resolve mutual physical development problems and to insure that plans are developed in harmony with affected organizations and jurisdictions. As issues arose and changes affecting the City were proposed, the Army officials would inform the Director of Planning and, as they became necessary, Installation Planning Board meetings were held to resolve issues.

In recent years, however, there has been no participation with the Installation Planning Board on matters of mutual concern. During the last three years there had been minimal interagency contact with the Army until the use of Presidio land for the two elementary schools became an issue.

In February of this year the San Francisco Unified School District notified the Department of City Planning that two elementary schools were proposed for the Presidio. There was considerable concern expressed by several citizen groups that the construction of these schools would be detrimental to the open character of the Presidio. The Department of City Planning began discussions with these citizen groups and with the Army planners (though not through the Installation Planning Board) in an attempt to resolve this problem.

At the same time, two areas of the Presidio were cleared for the

development of 252 units of new housing. Again, many San Franciscans expressed great concern over the preservation of the Presidio as an open area. At this time the Department of City Planning, which was then discussing the planning of the two elementary schools with the Army and the Unified School District, requested copies of the latest Presidio Master Plan.

II. STAFF EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT MASTER PLAN

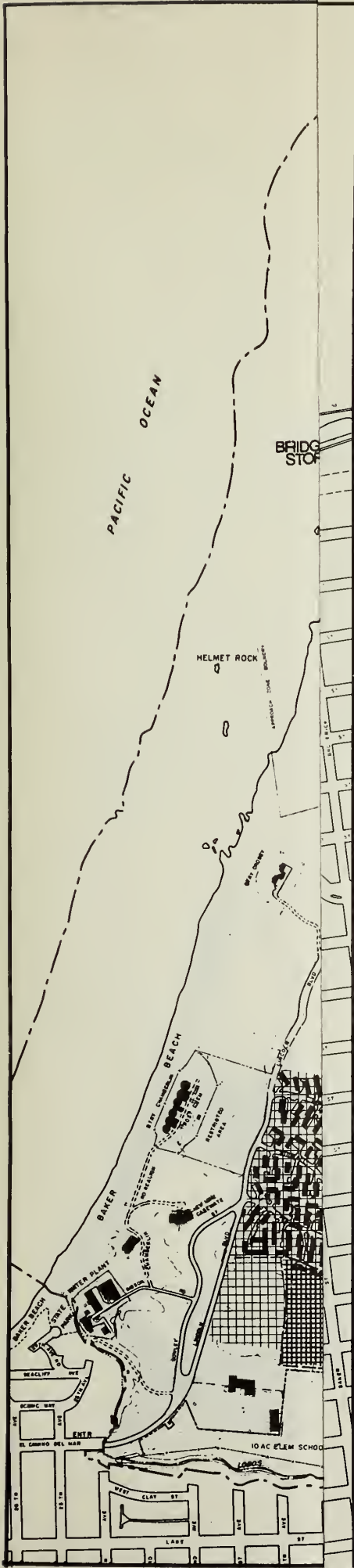
The planning effort on the Presidio produced major Master Plan documents in 1965. These documents include a detailed analysis of the physical plant, and analytical report on the Master Plan and map documents showing the plan essentially as it remains today. It is this set of documents, as currently revised, which is the concern of this report.

The Plan -- Form and Content, Assumptions and Priorities

The basic document of the plan is the general site plan map. The map is primarily a building location map which indicates sites occupied by present and proposed structures. The map also includes present and proposed improvements to the accessways leading to the Golden Gate Bridge, and areas not in Army use.

The Master Plan does not include a land use plan as a concept for ordering the use of the area and expressing use priorities. The current general site plan is primarily a building location plan and it does not serve the necessary function of a land use plan.

Similarly, important components of Presidio land use are not dealt with in the plan, or are treated insufficiently. These components of concern are primarily open space and recreation, historic preservation, and housing. Also, there are several areas in the Presidio for which there is no land use designated in the plan.

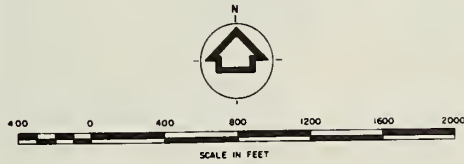


PRESIDIO MASTER PLAN

GENERAL SITE PLAN



NOTE: DATA PROVIDED BY THE PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO



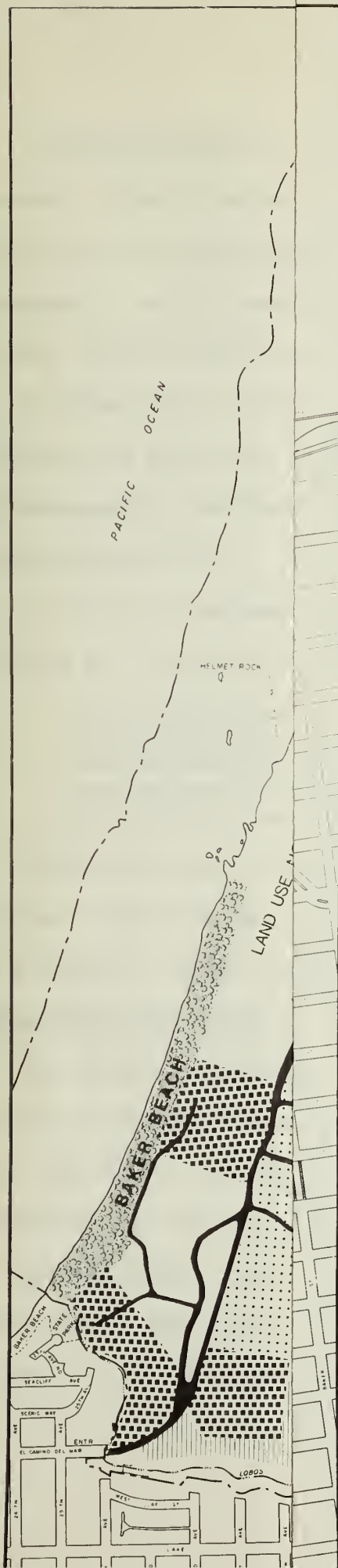


PRESIDIO MASTER PLAN

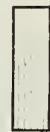
GENERAL SITE PLAN

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|
|  | EXISTING FAMILY HOUSING AREA |  | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|  | PROPOSED FAMILY HOUSING AREA |  | PROPOSED STRUCTURE |
| | |  | PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR LIMITED ACCESS ROADS AND AIRPORT |

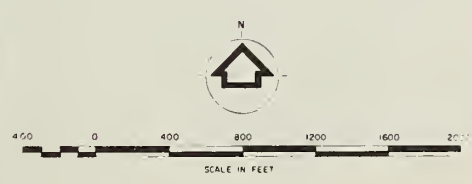
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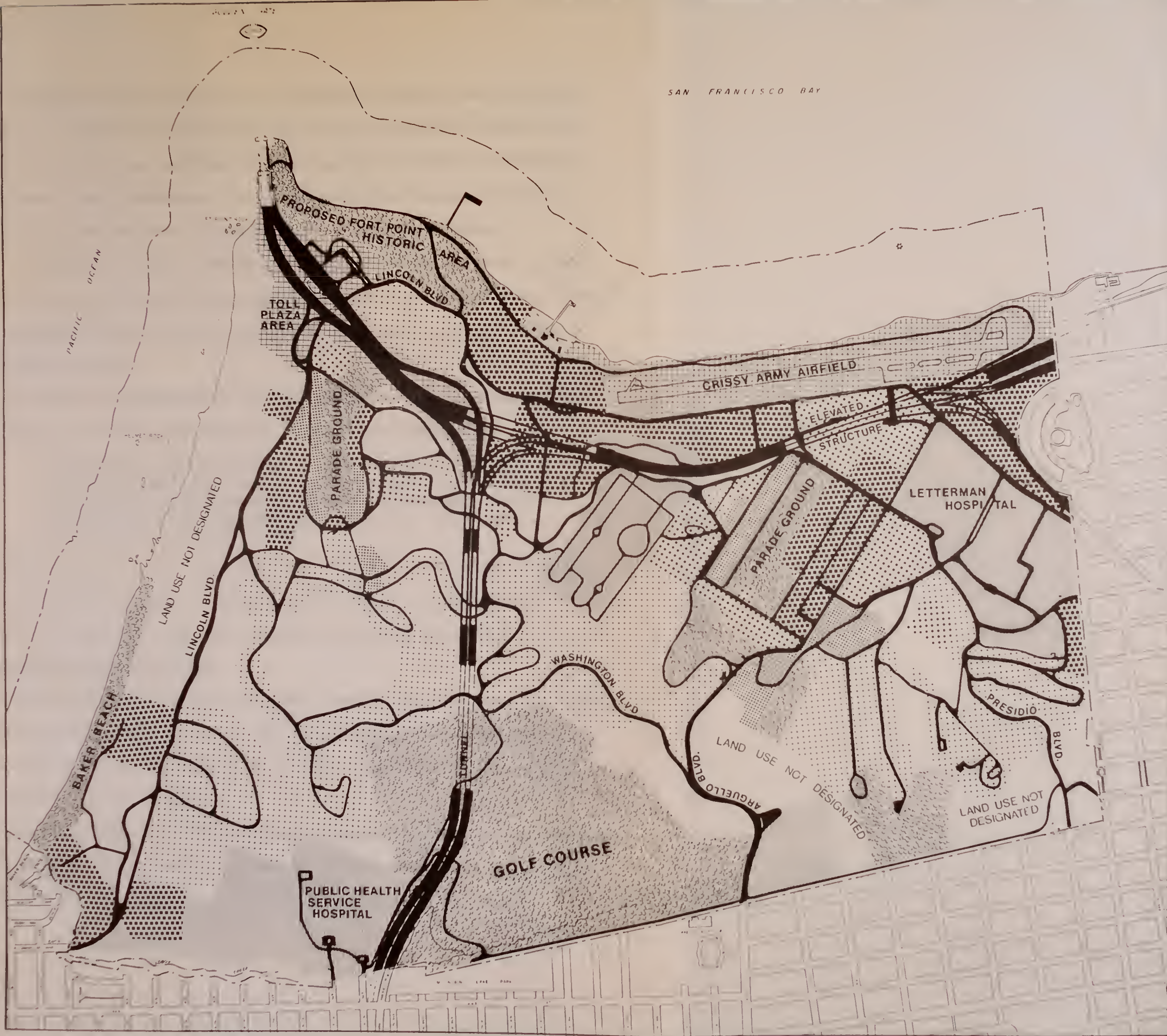


PROPOSED GENERALIZED LAND USE PATTERN

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
|  | ARMY ADMINISTRATION
AND SERVICES |  | COMMUNITY FACILITIES
AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES |
|  | INSTITUTIONAL |  | GROUP HOUSING |
|  | OPEN SPACE
AND RECREATION |  | FAMILY HOUSING |

NOTE: THIS MAP IS GENERALIZED FROM DATA ON THE PRESIDIO MASTER PLAN MAP





PROPOSED GENERALIZED LAND USE PATTERN

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|
| | ARMY ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICES | | COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES |
| | INSTITUTIONAL | | GROUP HOUSING |
| | OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION | | FAMILY HOUSING |

NOTE: THIS MAP IS GENERALIZED FROM DATA ON THE PRESIDIO MASTER PLAN MAP

The policy content of the plan is dispersed throughout the supporting documents. There is no explicit system of goals, objectives, policies and priorities in the plan, nor does the plan explicitly outline a strategy for development. Such information must be inferred from statements detailing the need for new facilities contained in the supporting documents.

In brief, while fairly precise in terms of existing and future building locations, the plan lacks general organizing statements of development policy, and inadequately treats several related and critically important components of Presidio land use.

In recent correspondence to the Department, the Army has indicated the following as its major considerations in Presidio development:

"Engineering and architecture of Army construction is done by professionals considering in order of priority: Mission requirements (satisfaction of the military mission), morale and welfare of military personnel, economy of siting and construction, and other factors."

Although the plan does not explicitly treat the preservation of open space and historic values, the Army has communicated its acknowledgment of the importance of these concerns, subject to the above priorities.

Component Analyses of the Plan

The following sections of this report identify selected issues of concern posed by the Presidio Master Plan, and issues which arise out of gaps in the plan. The report does not deal with the many questions raised by detailed site planning in the Presidio.

The Master Plan indicates circulation improvements and specific structure improvements. These proposed improvements raise several questions relative to City policy on transportation and the preservation of open space.

A. Transportation

There are two areas of citywide concern in the Presidio circulation proposals. These are: freeway treatment of accessways to the Golden Gate Bridge; and the expansion of Crissy Army Air Field. The internal routing of streets in the Presidio is not an immediate citywide concern, but one of more specific concern to the Army. Therefore, it will not be discussed in this report.

1. Freeway Treatment of Access to the Golden Gate Bridge

The Presidio Master Plan includes provision for major improvements to both the Park Presidio Boulevard and Marina/Lombard links to the Golden Gate Bridge. These proposed improvements are of freeway proportion and they presume freeway connections through the city north/south and east/west, and a second deck to the Golden Gate Bridge.

Plans to increase vehicular capacity over the Golden Gate Bridge and its connecting routes have been consistently vetoed by the Board of Supervisors of both San Francisco and Marin County. Both counties are committed to a long-range rapid transit solution for Marin corridor access. While San Francisco is planning improvements to its circulation system leading to the Presidio to relieve congestion in the Marina, these improvements would not increase capacity beyond that of the present accessway and bridge.

It is evident that freeway treatment of the bridge accessways, as indicated in the Presidio Master Plan, constrains planning in the Presidio, since land has been allocated along the existing access routes to accommodate freeway-scale connections. Presidio officials indicate that action to construct these expanded roadways must be initiated by the State. The fact that freeway proposals are contained in the Master Plan, however, lends weight

to positions which contradict City transportation policy. Consequently, planning in the Presidio should, if at all possible, properly reflect City transportation policy for the Marin corridor.

2. Expansion of Crissy Army Air Field

The plan provides for expansion of Crissy Army Air Field by extending the eastern end of the runway. Numerous demolitions are involved. However, there are a number of severe operational constraints on the use of the field, as the following excerpts from the supporting documents indicate.

"The most extensive operational facility (in the Presidio) is Crissy Army Air Field. Occupying the only large flat area on the installation, it exerts a major influence on all facilities north of the freeway..."

"The approach zones and surfaces are shown in the plan and profile insert at the top of drawing E-306 (not provided; see general site plan). Buildings and structures which violate the air space...include the south tower of the Golden Gate Bridge, portions of the freeway approaches to the bridge and almost all of the land mass west of the runway, including buildings thereon. To the east are trees, buildings and portions of Fort Mason, as well as the Fontana community apartment towers."

"There are defined danger areas shown for...the airfield."

"Standard airfield approach and lateral clearance zones are shown on the map. Numerous administration, community facilities and barracks buildings and the Post Engineer facility occupy the extremely hazardous runway end of the east approach zone creating not only an obstruction to aviation, but also a critical danger to the structures and personnel inside. The same condition exists to a lesser degree at the west end of the runway."

"In view of current applicable safety and clearance criteria, it is considered that the planned airfield development will not permit instrument approach and will require waivers on the following approach and lateral clearance obstructions:

The location and height of trees and flagpole in the City of San Francisco Marina Public Park, the location and height of the St. Francis Yacht Club and of masts on yachts in its harbor, and the location of 4-story private residences which are obstructions in the east approach zone."

"The planned airfield will also require protection of air navigation in the east approach zone outside the Presidio of San Francisco. At present, the government has little or no control over existing obstructions or the erection of obstructions in that area."

In view of the foregoing analysis, the impact of the cited constraints on the use of Crissy Field as a training facility, and the availability of military airfields with instrument facilities at Hamilton Field and at Alameda Naval Air Station, the proposed expansion of Crissy Field does not seem appropriate. The plan's commitment to continuing and expanding the use of this major facility precludes consideration of other military uses for which the site might be highly suitable. In a land-scarce area, this would seem to be of major concern to all. The freedom to accommodate alternate uses on the site, the reduction in the cost of maintaining this separate air navigation facility, and the acknowledged constraints on its operation would appear to far outweigh the value of maintaining and expanding this facility.

B. Proposed Use of Presidio Land

The proposed use and manner of development of several areas of the Presidio would appear to conflict with some City and regional land use priorities.

1. Inclusion of Unrelated Nonmilitary Uses

The plan provides for the expansion of the U.S. Public Health Service hospital site near the southwest corner of the Presidio to include a new Food and Drug Administration facility. The site proposed for the F.D.A. facility -- a beautifully wooded 20-acre expanse -- is contrary to City objectives of open space preservation. The Presidio should not be viewed by the Federal Government as a cost-free land bank for location of nonmilitary government functions unrelated to the Presidio's military missions and natural character.

government functions unrelated to the Presidio's military missions and natural character.

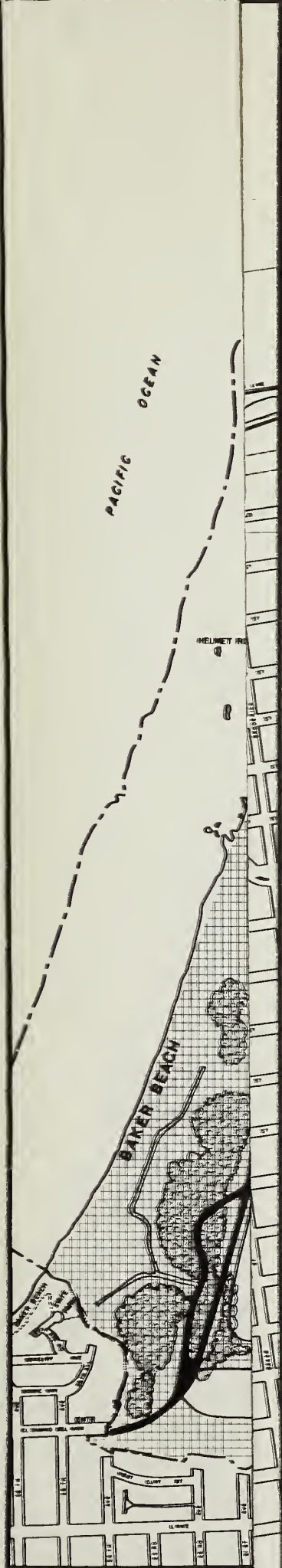
2. Expansion of Presidio Housing

Some 252 units of new family housing have recently been constructed in the Presidio, including 102 units south of the Fort Point area and on Lincoln Boulevard east of Baker Beach. Although it is likely that these units were constructed with as little disruption of their sites' natural ecology as possible, their location on important and valuable natural vantage points in the Presidio has served to diminish some of the most striking natural assets in the City and region.

The Master Plan proposes housing development on several more sites to bring the total of recently constructed and planned housing to 600 units. Thus some 348 additional units are planned to remedy the Presidio's family housing deficit as described in the plan.

The housing proposed is to be developed at the following locations:

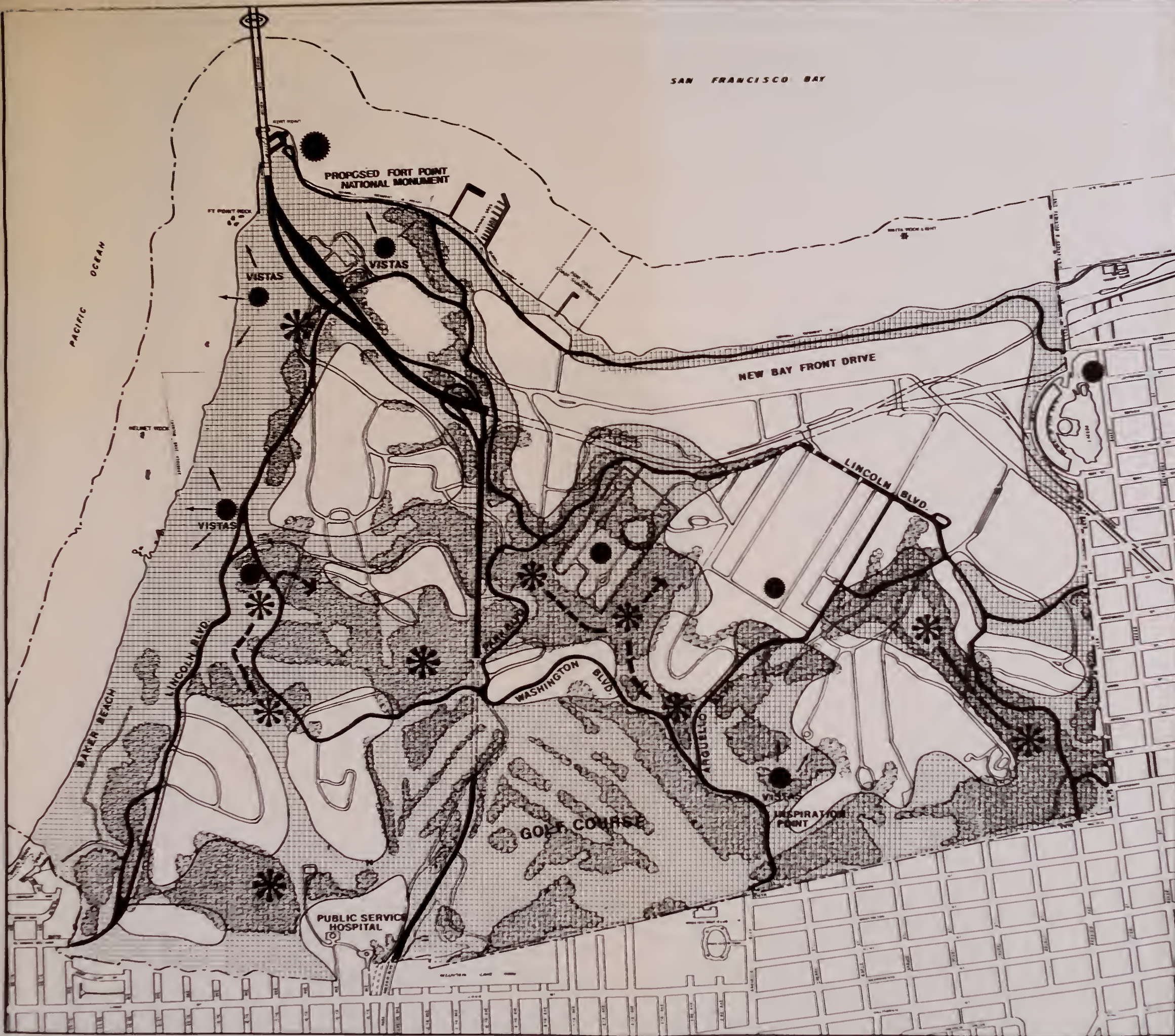
1. Two heavily wooded sites, one at El Polin Spring and one on Presidio Boulevard, adjacent to existing family housing.
2. A large wooded ridge area south of San Francisco National Cemetery.
3. Two heavily wooded sites west of Park Presidio Boulevard on either side of Washington Boulevard; a total of 52 units on roughly 13 acres.
4. An open sloping site north of the Public Health Service hospital; a total of 102 units on roughly 13 acres.
5. Eastward expansion of the recently constructed housing on Lincoln Boulevard on a heavily wooded site; a total of 42 units on the 5.4 acre expansion site.



CITY STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR OPEN SPACE

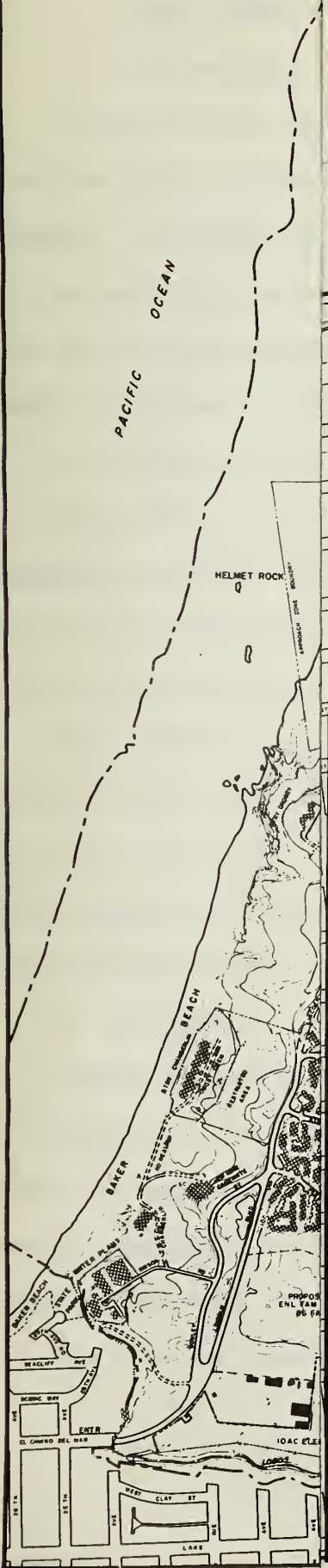
- AREAS PROPOSED TO REMAIN AS OPEN SPACE
- EXISTING MAJOR TREES
- PARKWAY SYSTEM
- AREAS WITH SIGNIFICANT VISTAS OR OF HISTORIC VALUE
- OPEN SPACE OR HISTORIC RESOURCE NOT TO BE RETAINED IN THE PRESIDIO MASTER PLAN, IN CONFLICT WITH THE CITY STAFF EVALUATION





CITY STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR OPEN SPACE

- AREAS PROPOSED TO REMAIN AS OPEN SPACE
- PARKWAY SYSTEM
- EXISTING MAJOR TREES
- AREAS WITH SIGNIFICANT VISTAS OR OF HISTORIC VALUE
- OPEN SPACE OR HISTORIC RESOURCE NOT TO BE MAINTAINED IN THE PRECIBIO MASTER PLAN, IN CONFLICT WITH THE CITY STAFF EVALUATION



PROPOSED DEMOLITION

EXISTING STRUCTURES NOT TO BE
RETAINED IN THE PRESIDIO MASTER PLAN



LEGEND

EXISTING NOT TO BE RETAINED	PROPOSED	EXISTING	BUILDING, PERMANENT
			BUILDING, SEMIPERMANENT
			BUILDING, TEMPORARY
			PAVED ROAD OR AREA
			UNPAVED ROAD OR AREA
			RAILROAD
			FENCE
			RESERVATION BOUNDARY
			RIGHT-OF-WAY OR EASEMENT LINES
			INDEX CONTOUR 50' INTERVAL
			INTERMEDIATE CONTOUR 10' INTERVAL

NOTE: DATA SOURCE - PRESIDIO MASTER PLAN MAP



6. A mixed open and wooded area offering significant westward views, along Washington Boulevard in the west-central portion of the Presidio; the site comprises some 15 acres.

The location of the proposed housing on the sites described above poses a serious threat to the preservation of the open space character of the Presidio. As noted, the sites possess valuable open space characteristics and, in some cases, points for viewing. The value of the Presidio as a prime open space and recreational resource in the City and region will be significantly diminished by the proposed development.

3. Expansion of Golden Gate Bridge Toll Crossings Maintenance Area.

The Master Plan provides for expansion of the Golden Gate Bridge toll crossings maintenance area into an area south of the present bridge plaza and west of Lincoln Boulevard. Two old ridge-line fortifications are on the path of the proposed expansion.

The expansion as presently planned could eliminate an element of Presidio history which presents a significant opportunity as a recreational and viewing resource. A way should be found to accommodate the necessary bridge improvements without sacrificing this strategically located, historic and recreational resource.

4. Demolitions

Planned demolitions in the Presidio are concentrated around the borders of Crissy Field, the built-up area north of Letterman Hospital, the area around the northwest parade ground and the toll booth maintenance expansion area, as previously noted. Of these, only the demolitions at the toll booth expansion area will remove improvements of some historical significance.

The scope of proposed demolition is extensive. Sites cleared should

be given every possible consideration for reuse in housing.

Summary Analysis

The Master Plan of the Presidio is a statement of development intentions for the Presidio, comprising development in support of Army missions, the functions of other Federal Government agencies, and some functions of the State of California and the City of San Francisco. It is not a complete statement of proposed land use, as noted earlier. Some important concerns are omitted, and the impact of development included in the plan upon these concerns could be extremely negative.

Many of the issues of Presidio development cut across the boundaries of governmental jurisdictions, and the ramifications of Presidio development extend beyond its borders. The process and substance of planning for the Presidio might well be broadened to reflect these considerations.

An Expanded Planning Effort for the Presidio

A plan for the Presidio should involve: 1) a functional evaluation and recommendation for the use of this land, 2) an evaluation of the Presidio as an open space and historic land resource, 3) a recognition of the interest of the general public in the use of Presidio lands, and 4) an explicit development strategy.

For example: The functional evaluation could indicate the extent of housing required and for whom; identify military and related uses, evaluating their future functional and spatial relationship; and evaluate internal recreational uses and their relationship to housing.

To resolve priorities of use between these various areas of concern, there should be a set of goals, objectives and policies established for the Presidio as a part of this plan. These statements should incorporate the

values of the public interest in the Presidio.

III. RECOMMENDATION

An evaluation process of this nature can help to illustrate the importance of comprehensive planning in the Presidio. Moreover, a broadened planning scope and a periodic review of plans can produce a coordinative mechanism of value to the Army and the City in the assessment and resolution of planning issues.

In order to achieve these common interests, it is recommended that the Army adopt a policy expanding the scope of its existing Master Plan to include the stated concerns of the public and the City. To do this it is recommended that the Army allocate sufficient funds to retain a planning consultant to assist Army planners in preparing the proposed comprehensive plan.

The scope of the work to be accomplished could be established in joint Department of City Planning and Army meetings, based on the evaluation contained in this report.

There is a clear need to establish objectives and policies as a basis for planning in the Presidio. A statement of objectives and policies would provide a basis for interested public agencies and citizens to express their concerns over the future development of the Presidio. In this connection it would be important for the Department of City Planning to participate in the proceedings of the Presidio Installation Planning Board. The Board can be responsible for local review and control of the planning process, insuring that public review is an integral part of the process and that the expressed concerns of the public are integrated into the Plan.

Action by the City Planning Commission

The City Planning Commission is requested to endorse this report and authorize the Director of Planning to transmit the report to the appropriate officials.

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